

I-405 Executive Committee Meeting

February 3, 2004 – 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Meeting Summary

The following is a summary of presentations given, issues raised, actions undertaken or recommendations made. When possible, lengthy discussions have been summarized into themes or summary statements.

Executive Committee members in attendance

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> George Kargianis
Chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rob McKenna
Metro King County
Council/RTID Board | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dan Mathis
FHWA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Dillon (Alt)
City of Kirkland | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sen. Jim Horn
WA State Senate | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sen. Margarita Prentice
WA State Senate |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connie Marshall
City of Bellevue | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Edwards
Port of Seattle | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Randy Corman
City of Renton |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patrick Ewing
City of Bothell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosemarie Ives
City of Redmond | <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Mullet
City of Tukwila |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sonny Putter
City of Newcastle | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joan McBride
City of Kirkland | <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Degginger (Alt.)
City of Bellevue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> David Dye
WSDOT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Morrow (Alt.)
City of Tukwila | <input type="checkbox"/> Aubrey Davis (Alt.)
WSTC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rep. Cheryl Pflug
WA State House of Reps. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dave Gossett
Snohomish County | <input type="checkbox"/> Jeff Sax
Snohomish County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fred Butler
Sound Transit | <input type="checkbox"/> Rep. Christopher Hurst
WA State House of Reps. | <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Paine (Alt.)
City of Redmond |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rick Krochalis
FTA | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harold Taniguchi
King County | <input type="checkbox"/> Tim Olsen (Alt.)
City of Bothell |

Staff and Observers

Jeff Switzer, Eastside Journal
Pete Beaulieu, PSRC
Nick Afzali, City of Renton
Chris Johnson, Councilman McKenna's office
Sandra Meyer, City of Renton
Kevin Shively, Transportation Choices

Happy Longfellow, Parametrix
Brian O'Sullivan, Sound Transit
Terry Marpert, City of Redmond
Ann Martin, King County Transportation
Kim Becklund, City of Bellevue

Project Management Team

Craig Stone, WSDOT
Kim Henry, WSDOT
Hank Peters, Consultant
Colleen Gants, PRR

Steve Quinn, HNTB
Keith McGowan, McGowan Environmental
Brian Wilkinson, Wilkinson Ferrari & Co.
Rita Brogan, PRR

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Rob McKenna called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Chairman George Kargianis joined the meeting at 10 a.m.

Mayor Rosemarie Ives requested that minutes from previous meetings be provided earlier so that board members have longer to review them. The board then approved the minutes from the October 14, 2003, meeting.

Mr. McKenna recognized a citizen comment from Margaret Keeler, representing homeowners at the Brookshore Condos in Bellevue. Ms. Keeler asked whether the condos would be directly affected by construction in the Wilburton Tunnel area. Craig Stone responded that right-of-way needs in this area do not anticipate affecting the condo complex. He said that Denise Cieri, the project's segment manager for Bellevue, could provide more information and would be happy to speak with all homeowners.

Mr. Stone then reviewed the agenda for today's meeting. It includes:

- Executive Committee membership
- Project Director's report
- Nickel Projects work program
- RTID status
- State and federal funding status
- Implementation plan status
- Wrap Up

Executive Committee membership

New board members Fred Butler, [title?], and Patrick Ewing, Mayor of Bothell, were introduced. Each briefly reviewed their background.

In light of new members, the board reviewed its charter, first developed in 1999 and updated in April 2002. It was agreed by consensus that the purpose and responsibilities of the board remain the same as set forth in the charter:

- To provide vision, policy and oversight in the development of the I-405 Corridor Program.
- To provide funding strategy and advocacy.
- To assure regional balance.
- To achieve consensus on I-405 investments.
- To assure public involvement is an integral part of the project decision process.

The board reviewed its upcoming meeting schedule. While the board has moved from a monthly to a quarterly meeting schedule, several meetings have been tentatively scheduled to respond to potential action by the Regional Transportation Investment District. All future meetings are planned for the Peter Kirk Room at Kirkland City Hall. Future meeting dates are:

- March 18, 2004, 9:30 a.m. (pending RTID action)
- April 13, 2004, 9:30 a.m. (pending RTID action)
- May 20, 2004, 9:30 a.m. (regular meeting)
- June 17, 2004, 9:30 a.m. (pending RTID action)
- September 16, 2004, 9:30 a.m. (regular meeting)

Project Director's report

Craig Stone report that the I-405 Team now includes more than 100 full-time staff (approximately 20 DOT staff and 80 GEC staff), as well as 100 on-call consultant staff. Co-location of DOT and GEC staff has begun and should be complete in early March. The new offices are located in downtown Bellevue at 600 108th Avenue, NE, Suite 405. Telephone numbers for all staff will be changing; a directory will be distributed in the coming weeks.

Nickel Projects work program

Mr. Stone described the environmental assessment process underway on the Kirkland nickel project. He reminded the board that this project has an 11-to-1 benefit-cost ratio, very high for transportation projects, which usually are in the 2-to-1 range. He indicated that a number of scope trade-offs remain to be decided. The largest of these are whether structures at NE 116th Street are replaced and the size of environmental mitigation at Forbes Creek.

Mr. Stone described the Tukwila/South Renton Nickel Project, which has a benefit/cost ratio of nearly 3-to-1. In response to a question from Sonny Putter, Mr. Stone said that improvements in the southeast part of this project are planned in such a way as to avoid wetlands as much as possible by expanding the roadway to the west of the current alignment.

For the Bellevue Nickel Project, Mr. Stone described options for expanding capacity in the Wilburton Tunnel area. This may include building a new tunnel to the east of the existing tunnel. The main roadway would run through the new tunnel, while access roads would use the existing tunnel. The Bellevue Nickel Project has a 3-to-1 benefit-cost ratio.

Mr. Stone reviewed the schedules for the three nickel projects, as well as for the North Renton project. While the environmental process is underway for North Renton, no construction money is available yet. In response to a question from Bob Edwards, Mr. Stone indicated that the cost for the North Renton project is \$1.3 billion, making it too large for the nickel funds. The project includes rebuilding most of the I-405 junction with SR 167 in a very constrained and topographically challenging area. Mr. Edwards then asked what the benefit-cost ratio was for the North Renton project. Mr. Stone responded that that information is not available yet, but will be later this spring when CEVP analyses are updated.

Mr. Putter asked how environmental work is being funded for the North Renton project. Mr. Stone replied that the City of Renton had provided a \$5 million grant, \$2 million of which is remaining to complete environmental and design work.

Mr. Stone moved on to describe the draft Quarterly Project Reports contained in board members' handouts. He described that these QPRs, also known as "beige pages" are official DOT reports and are included in the Department's quarterly "Grey Book." Mr. Kargianis emphasized that QPRs are essential to the Transportation Commission and provide a public status report on the Department's accountability.

and responsible use of resources. In response to a comment from Joan McBride, Mr. Stone clarified that while the "beige pages" are produced on beige paper in the final "Grey Book", the copies provided to the board at today's meeting are on plain white paper.

Mr. Stone introduced Denise Cieri, segment manager for the Kirkland and Bellevue projects, and Stacy Trussler, segment manager for the Tukwila/Renton and Bothell/Snohomish County projects. He described their role as "project ambassadors". They have "cradle-to-grave" responsibility for their projects, meaning they are accountable throughout the environmental, design and construction processes. Historically, responsibility for DOT projects has passed between managers who are responsible for various disciplines. This new approach is meant to streamline communications both inside the project team and externally with the public. Mr. Stone encouraged board members to get to know Ms. Cieri and Ms. Trussler as they will be seeing and hearing much more from them in the future.

Mr. Stone indicated that Community Advisory Committees have been or would be created for all communities in which there are projects. These include Tukwila, Renton, Bellevue and Kirkland. The purpose is to provide local input into environmental and design decisions. Each committee is being developed differently according to the needs of the local community.

Ms. Cieri indicated that the first meeting of the Kirkland Advisory Committee would held tomorrow, February 4, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Kirkland City Hall. The committee consists of business people, residents, City Council members and City staff.

Ms. Cieri went on to say that the Bellevue Advisory Committee would be formed soon as there are some critical design issues that need to be resolved in the downtown area. In response to an earlier citizen question from Margaret Keeler, Ms. Cieri said that impact to the Brookshire Condos is expected and that she would be pleased to meet with all residents there to describe the project and answer questions. In response to an earlier question from Mayor Marshall, Ms. Cieri said that construction work in the Wilburton Tunnel area would take about 20 percent of the Bellevue Nickel Project budget.

Ms. Trussler reported the Renton Advisory Committee consists primarily of City staff and is subdivided into subcommittees addressing various topics. She indicated that project staff had recently briefed the new Renton Mayor, Kathy Kochler-Wheeler [sp?], on the status of the project.

Ms. Trussler indicated that an advisory committee had also been set up in Tukwila and that is was organized into task forces to address various issues, including the City's urban center, transit-oriented development and direct access connections to the I-405 HOV lanes.

Mr. Stone then advised the board about a number of speaking engagements or presentations coming up in the near future, including:

- Kirkland Advisory Committee, February 4, 2004
- Bellevue Neighborhood Network North, February 11, 2004
- WSDOT Northwest Region Design and Construction Conference, February 24 and 25
- Tukwila City Council, March 1, 2004

- American Public Works Association, March 25, 2004

Mr. Stone also provided a list of the many other organizations at which presentations have been given over the course of the past year. He asked board members to provide suggestions for additional organizations at which the team could present.

Mr. Stone then showed a series of slides describing how the I-405 project fits into the regional transportation context. Seven in 10 Washington state residents live within 15 miles of Interstate 5. I-405 is part of the I-5 system. Mr. Stone showed a map indicating planned land use and urban centers throughout the Puget Sound region. Most of these centers are linked via Interstates 5 and 405. Next, he showed 1995 and 2010 maps of person trips throughout the region. Again, this emphasizes the importance of Interstates 5 and 405 to the region's mobility, but shows that the demand for trips on these roadways is beyond what the system can now accommodate.

Mr. Stone described how freight moves throughout the region and indicated that the Green River Valley is one of the nation's top 10 warehouse/logistics centers, emphasizing the importance of freight movement to the state's economy. The value of I-405 to freight movement is clear, particularly in the south end of the corridor where freight uses I-405 between the Port of Seattle, Sea-Tac Airport, Green River Valley warehouses, I-5 and I-90.

Mr. Stone showed a slide that indicates people using I-405 come from far beyond Eastside communities, emphasizing the highway's importance as a regional thoroughfare that complements I-5 for long distance trips. With Implementation Plan improvements, I-405 will be able to accommodate the population and traffic growth that is anticipated. This includes accommodating motorists who now use I-5 or Eastside surface streets rather than I-405 because it is too congested. Mayor Marshall emphasized that this is a very important point – residents of roads that parallel I-405 bear enough traffic and don't want to see more.

Mayor Ewing suggested that stopping improvements south of SR 522 will add to congestion just north of there in Bothell. Why won't improvements go all the way to the north junction with I-5? Council Member McKenna indicated that discussions had been held with Snohomish County representatives on the RTID Board, but they were not willing to add money for I-405 improvements in their list of RTID projects. He suggested that Mayor Ewing could help educate Snohomish officials about this need. Council Member Gossett, also an RTID Board member, said that this section is very expensive to rebuild because of the SR 522 interchange. There is simply not enough money to go around. He said he would be happy to provide Mayor Ewing with more background on deliberations about this issue.

RTID status

Mr. Kargianis introduced the RTID status agenda item by reminding the board how important it is to blend the nickel funding together with regional funding to achieve a significant portion of the project vision. He introduced Kjris Lund, recently hired as RTID Executive Director, and former director of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation.

Ms. Lund introduced herself, saying that as a former Woodinville resident she knows I-405 very well and that, in fact, I-405 is a critical part of the RTID package. She indicated that she had been hired to provide general administration, to develop and

implement a communications plan in support of a ballot measure, and to provide necessary legal work. She has retained the Foster Pepper law firm and Rockey Hill & Knowlton public relations firm as subconsultants.

Ms. Lund said that two critical issues need to be resolved before a ballot measure can go forward. These are 1) How reliant can RTID be on the sales tax? and 2) What is the best balance between roads and transit needs? She said that RTID Board members are considering talking with Sound Transit representatives about a possible joint ballot measure that could resolve the roads-transit balance issue. Another major challenge is to get the legislation authorizing RTID changed by the current legislature.

She said that the RTID Board is still aiming for to have the measure on the November 2004 ballot. This is desirable because it is a presidential general election year, meaning that voter turnout will be higher than other election dates, particularly special election dates. A go/no go decision on meeting the November ballot is looming quickly, however.

A discussion ensued about the mechanics of how a joint RTID/Sound Transit ballot measure might work. There are several options, but the intent is that it will be an "all or nothing" approach, meaning that both the RTID portion and the ST portion must pass together.

Ms. Lund answered a variety of questions about polling data that shows the best voter results with a smaller sales tax increase, a smaller overall package size and the addition of light rail. Joan McBride observed that the poll results showed relatively soft support and meant we face a struggle ahead. Rick Krochalis said he thinks it would be better to delay the RTID vote until there is tangible progress on the Nickel Projects. Mr. McKenna responded that we have pressing needs now, that projects like the Alaskan Way Viaduct can't wait another five years.

Board members agreed that it would be vital for RTID to develop a project list that a substantial portion of the public can "relate to" and could see that they'd get something significant out of it.

Mr. McKenna said it is important to meet the November ballot deadline because 1 in 4 voters votes only during presidential elections. He reminded the board that Sound Transit achieved its positive vote during a presidential election year.

Mr. Kargianis thanked Ms. Lund for her report and requested that she kept the board updated on the situation.

State and federal funding

Mr. Stone provided a brief update on state and federal funding. This consists of a variety of federal grants for transportation demand management, for work on 10th Street in Bellevue and for additional construction in the Bellevue area [?]. Mr. Putter reported that Newcastle had received \$1 million to begin work on Coal Creek Parkway improvements. Mr. Krochalis provided an update on the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill, which expires at the end of February. He said that Congress may vote to extend the bill for a short term rather than the normal six year period.

Implementation Plan

Mr. Stone referred board members to the Implementation Plan booklet in their meeting materials. The booklet details the \$4.7 billion Implementation Plan the board adopted at its October 2003 meeting. It describes various components and benefits of the program. Board members should use this as a desk reference when seeking details about the program.

Wrap up

Mr. Stone again referred board members to the schedule of regular and potential board meetings. The next regular board meeting is May 20 at 9:30 a.m. at Kirkland City Hall. The next tentative board meeting (pending RTID action) is March 18 at 9:30.m., also at Kirkland City Hall. An e-mail notice will be sent to all members if a tentative meeting needs to be called.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.